

## SPIRITUALS

Go Down Moses  
Balm in Gilead  
By an' By  
Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child  
John Henry  
Water Boy  
Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen  
Joshua Fit de Battle of Jericho

**PAUL ROBESON, Bass-Baritone**  
with piano and vocal accompaniments by  
**LAWRENCE BROWN**

**COLUMBIA MASTERWORKS**  
Set M-610

It has often been suggested that the strength of America lies in the fact that its people combine in themselves almost every possible racial and religious background. In addition, those people who founded this country, both the early settlers and many who came long after, were and are for the most part a selected group. People who were too strong, too mentally honest and morally responsible to endure injustice came. So did people who were willing to turn their backs on the old and familiar and start out afresh in a land of greater opportunity. When the Negro first arrived it was under the oppression of slavery, an indignity from which he has since triumphantly risen. These first Negroes were a select group, too, picked for their physiques, their intelligence, and their ability to work. To the land to which they had thus come, at

first in bondage, the Negro Americans have contributed brilliantly. Although almost every field of the arts and sciences is the richer for Negro contributions, perhaps music has benefited most of all.

Spirituals are folk songs which were created by and which belong to the American Negro. In these song-stories, which are sometimes protest, frequently worship of the Saviour and His promise of the Kingdom to come, and often music to accompany hard physical labor, the Negro poured out his heart and



Paul Robeson

soul. They were sincere and genuine, and because of this they were great.

Highly gifted arrangers such as H. T. Burleigh, Hall Johnson, and Lawrence Brown have set these spirituals down on paper, and there are others who have written songs patterned after the spirituals which endeavor to reflect their feeling. The true spiritual usually comes out into the light of day complete in itself, and no one man can be said to have

started it on its way. Antonin Dvořák wrote his perennially popular *New World Symphony* under the inspiration of spirituals, and the song concocted from the *Largo* movement, under the title "Goin' Home," is often mistaken for the real thing.

Among the great singers who are able to do justice to spirituals, none can surpass the interpretations given by Paul Robeson. Gifted with a magnificent voice, he has, in addition, the understanding and deep insight into this music which enables him to give these spirituals much meaning and depth. His great art lies in the fact that he never has to struggle for effect or emulate the agonies of the nightclub soprano who is compelled to rip a chiffon handkerchief to shreds in order to get across the idea that her heart is bleeding and broken. Paul Robeson sings spirituals simply and straightforwardly, as they were meant to be sung. In this album Lawrence Brown occasionally supplies a vocal as well as piano accompaniment. Instances are rare where the accompanist is allowed to qualify for such a role, his usual function being to impersonate as far as possible the Invisible Man. Mr. Brown is the happy exception and his vocalizing, discreetly inserted at the proper times, is altogether appropriate and enjoyable.

Notes by JOHN BALL, JR.

\* \* \*

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M610-1

GO DOWN MOSES  
(Arranged by H. T. Burleigh)  
PAUL ROBESON (Baritone)  
accompanied by Lawrence Brown  
at the piano  
17379-D  
(CO 35555)



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**M 610-2**

**BALM IN GILEAD**

(Arranged by H. T. Burleigh)

**PAUL ROBESON (Baritone)**

accompanied by Lawrence Brown

at the piano

**17379-D**

(CO 35556)

C O 3 5 5 5 6



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M610-3

BY AN' BY

(Arranged by H. T. Burleigh)

PAUL ROBESON (Baritone)

Piano and vocal accompaniments

by Lawrence Brown

17380-D

(CO 35551)



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**SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD**

(Arranged by L. Brown)

**PAUL ROBESON (Baritone)**

accompanied by Lawrence Brown

at the piano

**17380-D**

(CO 35552)

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JOHN HENRY  
(Arranged by Hall Johnson)  
PAUL ROBESON (Baritone)  
accompanied by Lawrence Brown  
at the piano  
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**WATER BOY**  
- Robinson -

**PAUL ROBESON** (Baritone)  
accompanied by Lawrence Brown

at the piano  
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C O B B B B H

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**NOBODY KNOWS DE TROUBLE I'VE SEEN**

(Arranged by L. Brown)

**PAUL ROBESON (Baritone)**

accompanied by Lawrence Brown

at the piano

**17382-D**

(CO 35557)





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Piano and vocal accompaniments

by Lawrence Brown

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